

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GABORO 01916 211257Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

ACDA-12 TRSE-00 HA-05 MCT-01 /082 W

-----010975 211344Z /72

R 211105Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO KUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2535

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 1916

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MORG BC

SUBJ: PRESIDENT KHAMA SPEAKS TO BOTSWANA DEFENSE FORCE

REF: (A) GABORONE 1004, (B) GABORONE 0895, (C) GABORONE 0890

SUMMARY: DURING THE GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE FIRST CLASS OF BDF OFFICER CADETS ON JUNE 17 PRESIDENT KHAMA STRESSED THE NECESSITY OF DISCIPLINE AND WARNED BDF AGAINST PROMOTING OR DEFENDING TRIBAL INTERESTS AND ENGAGING IN POLITICS. END SUMMARY

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. IN A STRONGLY WORDED SPEECH ADDRESSED TO THE GRADUATES PRESIDENT KHAMA EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF BDF ATTITUDES TOWARD CIVILIANS: HOLDING THEIR INTERESTS PRIMARY AND BUILDING UP THEIR TRUST AND CONFIDENCE. HE STATED: "YOU CANNOT ENDEAR YOURSELF TO ANYBODY BY USING YOUR GUNS TO INTIMIDATE INNOCENT BATSWANA IN THE BEERHALLS, IN THE VILLAGES AND EVERYWHERE ELSE. YOU ARE SERVANTS OF THE PEOPLE, NOT THEIR MASTERS."

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GABORO 01916 211257Z

2. THE PRSSIDENT DREW A FIRM LINE BETWEEN THE ROLE OF CIVILIAN POLITICIANS AND THE RIGID CODE OF CONDUCT WHICH MILITARY MEN ARE TO FOLLOW. "THERE CAN BE NOTHING MORE DANGEROUS THAN A POLITICIZED ARMY IN A MULTI-PARTY DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY. IN POLITICS THERE IS USUALLY VERY LITTLE DISCIPLINE, BUT FOR YOUR PROFESSION, DISCIPLINE IS ABSOLUTELY VITAL." A PARTICULAR POINT HE STRESSED SEVERAL TIMES WAS THAT INDIVIDUALS IN THE

BDF SHOULD NOT USE THE FORCE AS A VEHICLE FOR FURTHERING SECTIONAL OR TRIBAL INTERESTS. THEIR DUTY IS TO DEFEND THE COUNTRY AGAINST PERCEIVED INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ENEMIES. ALLUDING TO THE SITUATION IN OTHER NATIONS, PRESIDENT KHAMA FURTHER STATED THAT "THERE ARE MANY INSTANCES ELSEWHERE OF MILITARY MEN TERRORIZING THE VERY CIVILIANS THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO PROTECT."

3. RECOGNIZING THE SMALL SIZE OF THE BDF AND THE LIMITED RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IT, KHAMA SAID BDF HAD PROVED ITSELF EQUAL TO THE TASKS FACING IT DURING ITS FIRST YEAR OF EXISTENCE. HE ADDED THAT A STRONG FEELING OF COMMITMENT AND PATRIOTISM SHOULD BE THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND BUILDING MORALE, "NOT MERE QUANTITY". THE PRESIDENT CONCLUDED WITH A WARNING THAT THE WORST WAS STILL TO COME AS THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA BECOMES MORE TENSE EVERY DAY. END UNCLASSIFIED.

BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL

4. COMMENT: PRESIDENT KHAMA'S SPEECH WAS BOTH A REAFFIRMATION OF HIS OWN LONG HELD CONVICTIONS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF AN APOLITICAL BDF AND AN EXHORTATION TO OFFICER CADETS TO DO A BETTER JOB OF BUILDING A DISCIPLINED MILITARY FORCE. DURING ITS FIRST YEAR OF EXISTENCE, BDF MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING MILITARY CAPABILITY, BUT ITS REPUTATION WAS SOMEWHAT TARNISHED BY A FEW INCIDENTS OF HIGH-HANDED AND CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 GABORO 01916 211257Z

ARBITRARY BEHAVIOR BY ISOLATED BDF UNITS OR SOLDIERS. THE MOST DAMAGING OF THESE INCIDENTS WAS, OF COURSE, THE DEATH OF THREE FOREIGNERS WHILE IN DETENTION BY THE BDF TROOPS IN TULI BLOCK (REFTELS). PRESIDENT KHAMA RELUCTANTLY ACQUIESCED IN CREATION OF BDF IN RESPONSE TO UNRELENTING PRESSURE OF RHODESIAN CONFLICT, DESPITE HIS KEEN AWARENESS OF THE DISMAL EXPERIENCES OF OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES WITH THEIR MILITARY FORCES. HIS TOUGH SPEECH TO BDF CADETS DEMONSTRATES THAT HE REMAINS DETERMINED TO CREATE AN EFFECTIVE BDF UNDER STRICT CIVILIAN CONTROL. THIS TASK IS MADE SOMEWHAT EASIER BY THE WELL KNOWN COMMITMENT OF BDF COMMANDING GENERAL MERAFFE TO PRINCIPLES ENUNCIATED IN PRESIDENT KHAMA'S SPEECH TO THE CADETS. NORLAND

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMED FORCES, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978GABORO01916
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780258-0985
Format: TEL
From: GABORONE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780637/aaaabfph.tel
Line Count: 108
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7590b784-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 GABORONE 1004, 78 GABORONE 895, 78 GABORONE 890
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2270059
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT KHAMA SPEAKS TO BOTSWANA DEFENSE FORCE
TAGS: PINT, MORG, BC, (KHAMA, SERETSE M)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7590b784-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014